

Draft: Mark Pierzchala, May 6, 2013, for discussion.
(Amended by City staff as per discussion of May 6.)

Attachment A

May 14, 2013

Ms. Françoise Carrier
Chairperson
Montgomery County Planning Department
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: City of Rockville Comments on the Draft Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan

Dear Ms. Carrier,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan (CTCFMP). We, as well as our Planning Commission, Traffic and Transportation Commission, and staff, have reviewed the Plan and have received informative presentations from your staff.

The City supports the concept of increased public transportation options in the County and region. We recognize that the Plan's central purpose is to identify the optimum routes for a future system and also identify the rights of way that will be necessary to support them. Following are our conclusions.

1. The County has set a very tight timeline for this Plan, and we have been given very little time to fully study this very ambitious Plan and make recommendations.
2. We are concerned that elements of the Draft Plan have been included, without full consultation with City residents, businesses, officials, or staff.
3. It is premature to identify the number of stations and their locations at this time. The CTCFMP has not addressed wider land use questions, impacts on automobile circulation, connections with other mass transit systems, and the physical ability to place proposed lanes and stations.
4. There is no objection to the placement of the 12 proposed routes on the CTCFMP, including those that pass through Rockville. At this time, we recommend that the plan should simply identify the City routes that should be placed in the County's Master Plan. We regard the designation of the routes as a valuable, necessary first step, and the start of a far larger process.
5. The City sees little agreement from the parties involved regarding the overarching purposes of the Bus Rapid Transit system. In particular, there is an unresolved tension between the number of stops and the system's rapidity. It is also unclear to the City how County elected officials and County and State Agencies will arrive at their decisions. The main purposes of the system should be explicitly clarified before moving forward.

An attachment to this letter details the concerns from our Planning Commission and Traffic and Transportation Commission.

A companion letter to the County Executive and the County Council is also attached for your review.

Yours,
Mayor and Council of Rockville
Cc:
Attachments: